

REPORT OF THE GRAND JURY
JULY 2001 TERM

TO

2001 SEP 28 PM 2:14

DAVIDSON COUNTY CLERK

THE HONORABLE CHERYL BLACKBURN DIVISION III CRIMINAL COURT

THE HONORABLE VICTOR S. JOHNSON DISTRICT ATTORNEY GENERAL

Every member of this term of the Davidson County Grand Jury has stated that this has been an interesting and informative three (3) months. Very few of the jurors, both regular and alternate, have had any experience with the Grand Jury system or any other part of the criminal justice system. One juror, however, had served on a previous grand jury several years ago and commented on how nice the accommodations are now compared to then. Several of the alternates were keenly disappointed when they were excused.

Previous Grand Jury reports have addressed the same problems that this panel identified. It appears that the citizens of Nashville have been made aware of them but, to date, have not given them high enough priority to implement the solutions.

In general the police officers that appeared before us were dedicated professionals who presented their cases in an easy to understand fashion and were eager to answer any questions from the jurors.

Issues of Concern

1. This Grand Jury felt that the jurors were asked to donate a lot of their time and make a rather large commitment for a disproportionate fee. It appears that the fee system has not kept abreast of the times. It is suggested that the daily fee be raised to twenty dollars (\$20.00), and that the alternates be paid whether they serve that day or not.
2. The visit to Juvenile Court was very rewarding. It was felt that with the added services that the building is too small. Long range planning should include more space for the social workers and case managers as well as more circulation room for the juveniles.
3. The tour of the Drug Court facility was most educational. It is easy to understand why it is a model for other governments to use in trying to curb the drug problem. The staff, headed by Mike Jones and Bill Gupton took great pride, and rightly so, in explaining their program. Judge Seth Norman is to be applauded for his vision and resolve in getting this program started. His caring and continued personal involvement in the program over the past four (4) years is certainly evident in its operation today.
4. Efforts should be made to schedule more cases per day to be heard. Many times we finished our schedule before 11:00a.m. Working until 1:00p.m. would not further inconvenience the jurors. Scheduling of the witnesses to present the cases generally went

well; however, consideration should be given to the practice of having all presenters present before having the case heard. Several cases required postponing a vote until another day because the officers present could not testify to all of the indictments. When these second officers appeared, the jury had to review those portions of the case that we had heard before.

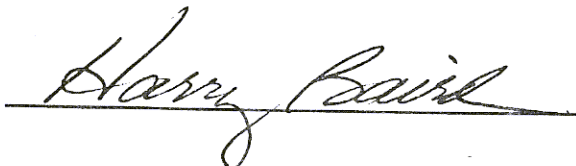
5. It was felt that consideration be given to having General Johnson's orientation of the jurors occurring on the same day that the jury is selected and charged.

Our thanks and appreciation go to Judge Cheryl Blackburn and her staff of Donna Draper and David Whitworth for all of their help. The assistance of the District Attorney's Office, particularly Georgia Smith, Debbie Etherly, and Michaela Matthews are equally as appreciated.

Everyone feels it has been an honor to serve on the Grand Jury and that they have a better feel for the operation of our criminal justice system.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED THIS THE 28TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2001.

Harry Baird, Grand Jury Foreperson

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Harry Baird", is written over a horizontal line.

Crystal Whited

Wilma Jetton

Edythe Canthurs

Paula Franklin

Kassandra Neff

FREDDY ANDERSON

Richard O. McDonald

Calvin Binkley

Mr. Bess

David Vines

Mrs. Hinsley

Alice Craft